

U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mr. David Rudy

Official School Name: West Point Middle School

School Mailing Address: 705 Barry Road
West Point, NY, DD 10996-1196

County: NA State School Code Number: none

Telephone: (845) 938-2923 E-mail: david.rudy@am.dodea.edu

Fax: (845) 938-2568 Web URL: http://www.am.dodea.edu/ny_va/westpoint/middle/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Michael Gould Superintendent e-mail: Michael.Gould@am.dodea.edu

District Name: New York/Virginia/Puerto Rico District Phone: (703) 630-7012

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Debbie Gerber

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

11DD1

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

11DD1

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 6 Elementary schools
(per district designation) 2 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
1 K-12 schools
11 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 18604

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	30	32	62
K	0	0	0		7	28	30	58
1	0	0	0		8	28	33	61
2	0	0	0		9	0	0	0
3	0	0	0		10	0	0	0
4	0	0	0		11	0	0	0
5	32	27	59		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								240

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
11 % Black or African American
11 % Hispanic or Latino
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
67 % White
9 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 25%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	26
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	32
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	58
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	235
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.25
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	25

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 1%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 3

Number of languages represented, not including English: 2

Specify languages:

German, Korean

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 12%
 Total number of students who qualify: 28

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 8%
 Total number of students served: 19

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>3</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>16</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 15:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	93%	95%	92%	96%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	23%	29%	20%	15%	15%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Daily Student Attendance- Missing Data

Estimate provided for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, as district office did not start historical archive of attendance data until 2007-2008. Estimate provided is average attendance rate for 2007-2010.

Daily Teacher Attendance Rates Explanation

2009-2010: three out of 19.5 teachers were out for medical needs that accounted for twenty-five percent of total time missed- 34 days (knee surgery), 20 days (pregnancy), 12 days (lower GI condition)

2007-2008: five out of twenty teachers were out for medical needs that accounted for forty-five percent of total time missed- 35 days (traumatic injury), 34 days (pregnancy), 25 days (mental health), 21 days (care of spouse), 11 days (knee injury)

2005-2006: Data only exists in paper format stored at off-site location. Reporting average attendance rate from 2006-2007 to 2009-2010.

Teacher Turnover Rates Explanation

2009-2010: 4.5 teachers left- 1.5 due to staffing reduction, two military spouses whose husbands were reassigned, one DoDEA teacher transferred to Okinawa to be close to her husband

2008-2009: six teachers left- three retirements, one military spouse whose husband was reassigned, one removal, one probationary teacher whose contract was not renewed

2007-2008: four teachers left- two retirements, one DoDEA teacher transferred to Georgia school to be near her children, one DoDEA teacher accepted a district-level position in Germany

2006-2007: three teachers left- two retirements, one military spouse whose husband was reassigned

2005-2006: three teachers left- two retirements, one military spouse whose husband was reassigned

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

West Point Middle School (WPMS) is a Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school located amidst the historic buildings on the grounds of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. The student body is composed of children of officers, enlisted personnel, and civilians who live on the military academy post and whose primary responsibility is to work with the cadets. Most of the parents serve as professors at the Academy and hold at least a Master's degree. The collegiate environment fosters intrinsic academic motivation in students and creates a highly focused, professional environment in which to learn. Students attend classes in a 1934 vintage building taught by a dedicated civilian staff. The school's roots date back to 1821, the first record of a school on West Point established for the children of service members, making it the oldest continually-run school in DoDEA.

The DoDEA mission, "To provide an exemplary education that inspires and prepares all DoDEA students for success in a dynamic, global environment," is realized in the vision statement of West Point Middle School: "Ensuring highest achievement for all learners." Several support options are in place to make this vision a reality, including additional time before, during, and after school to provide students with whatever it takes to achieve at the highest possible levels. The Principal and the Guidance Counselor track student progress on a weekly basis to quickly identify and address performance concerns. This has resulted in a quarterly failure rate of less than one percent. Strong partnerships with parents and the community foster a team approach to ensuring that all learners perform at high levels. Parent conference days are required duty assignment locations for military service members, and the command on post staffs a School Liaison Officer position to address any community or individual family issues.

Great students, supportive families, dedicated teachers, and solid community stakeholder relationships conspire to create a learning community in which a tradition of excellence has been firmly established. West Point Middle School consistently ranks as the highest-performing middle school in DoDEA on the annual, norm-referenced *TerraNova* Multiple Assessments administered every spring. Roughly half of all eighth grade students are enrolled in Algebra 1 for high school credit and a Living Environment (Biology) course that follows New York State curriculum for placement on the honors track as ninth graders at the local high school in the town of Highland Falls, NY. Since 1997, students enrolled in advanced math and science at WPMS have scored on average at or above 85% on the New York State Regents Exams for these subjects. Similar results have been achieved on the New York State Spanish Proficiency Exam by WPMS students, including an average score of ninety-five percent over the past six years. Fifty-three percent of all seventh grade students are enrolled in Spanish 1 for high school credit; fifty-seven percent of all eighth grade students are enrolled in Spanish, all but seven in Spanish 2 for high school credit. Although representing less than one-quarter of the graduating class at O'Neill High School in Highland Falls, five of the top ten in the class the last two years have been graduates of West Point Middle School.

West Point Middle School is more worthy of Blue Ribbon status today than when it was first so honored for the 1997-1998 school year. The needs of the military child and family have increased exponentially over the past nine years of war in which our great Nation has been engaged. The majority of our students have dealt with the stress and uncertainty of parental deployment, many three and four times; tragically, some of the parents have paid the ultimate sacrifice and did not return. Despite these significant, ongoing hardships in the lives of our students, the staff at WPMS continues to provide a challenging, nurturing educational experience in all classrooms that results in very high rates of student achievement. Teachers have fully embraced technology as a tool for teaching and learning, and interactive white boards are being used in every classroom. Current professional development activities are focused on the use of classroom-level data to appropriately differentiate instruction for all learners, so that every student is met at their present level for every unit of instruction. Full actualization of the vision statement, "Ensuring highest achievement for all learners," by focusing on the needs of individual students enables West Point Middle School to meet the standard of excellence in public education that is the very spirit of the Blue Ribbon program.

1. Assessment Results:

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is a public school system that has assessed student progress annually since school year 2008-2009 using the norm-referenced test, *TerraNova* Multiple Assessments, third edition. Prior to 2008-2009, the second edition of the *TerraNova* was given. As the norms for the third edition differ from those in previous editions, it is statistically inappropriate to compare scores across both test versions. Performance data on this assessment has historically been analyzed by our learning community and communicated to stakeholders in National Percentile (NP) form, and recently also as Norm Curved Equivalent (NCE) scores. Given this unique situation, the Director of the Blue Ribbon Schools program has allowed West Point Middle School (WPMS) to submit Scale Scores (SS) using the format typically reserved for private schools. The SS cut points used by Blue Ribbon Schools for private school nominees are the averages of private school in the top fifteen percent. Presenting and discussing data in this way is most appropriate given the type of assessment administered, although this narrative will include references to NP scores when appropriate.

WPMS students perform well above national, DoDEA, and district averages on all five *TerraNova* subtests (Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies) every year. As is often the case with high-performing schools, none of the gains or losses over the past five years can be characterized as significant. Looking at the *TerraNova* scores on the third edition from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010, NP scores have increased in reading by three percentage points in grades five and seven but declined in grade six (83% to 82%) and grade eight (85% to 74%). In mathematics, NP scores have increased in grade five by twenty-one percentage points (64% to 85%), by three percentage points in grade six (80% to 83%), and by four percentage points in grade seven (79% to 83%). Grade eight NP math scores dropped two percentage points (82% to 80%). Scale scores for the two years increased for grade five reading and math, grade six reading and math, and grade seven reading. Grade seven mathematics dropped from 714 to 712. Grade eight reading dipped from 718 to 709. Grade eight mathematics decreased from 730 to 726.

For the subgroups, all but one performed within ten percentage points between the scale scores of all students and subgroups exists for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic students outperformed the school average in reading for grades six, seven, and eight and in mathematics for grades six and seven. African American students' scale scores were within three percentage points at all grade levels for reading and all but grade seven for math. The only subgroup for which a gap in excess of seven percentage points exists is mathematics, grade seven, special education. The four seventh grade students that comprise this subgroup had a scale score of 620 on the math subtest, compared with the whole group score of 712, a thirteen percent difference. One of the four students in the subgroup took the test without appropriate accommodations at the insistence of the parent and scored so low (SS of 487) that it brought down the subgroup score. When removing his score, the subgroup score increases to 665, 7% off the whole group score. DoDEA districts do not collect free/reduced lunch program data. Twelve percent of WPMS students participate in the free-reduced lunch program.

DoDEA describes "meeting the standard" as NP scores above fifty percent. The performance level of "at standard," is used for NP scores ranging from fifty-one to seventy-five percent; "above standard," describes NP scores ranging from seventy-six to ninety-nine percent. The website URL on which DoDEA's assessment results may be found is <https://webapps.dodea.edu/SRC/>

2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment data drives the school improvement efforts of West Point Middle School (WPMS). Standardized test results were used to select the school improvement goals focused on improving writing and problem solving across the curriculum. Student and school performance on these goals is tracked annually using objective performance indices on the *TerraNova Multiple Assessments*, third edition, and a

local assessment administered three times per school year. Additionally, classroom-level assessments created by teachers provide current, subject-specific performance data that teachers use to guide instructional activities.

WPMS teachers have engaged in several professional development activities over the past three years to increase their systematic use of assessment data to improve teaching and learning. The work of Richard Stiggins et al from the Assessment Training Institute has been adopted by WPMS teachers increasing and refining their use of formative assessment results as a primary data point in lesson planning. The principal has also trained teachers on the use of data to differentiate instruction based on the teachings of Carol Ann Tomlinson. Teachers are using formative assessment data to create flexible, temporary instructional groups that engage in instructional activities tailored for their present level of performance towards achieving an identified learning target.

The school uses a variety of assessment data to make placement decisions for students. Every student takes the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) three times per year in order to track their Lexile reading score. Students are placed in the Reading Lab support class when their Lexile score falls below grade level. The *Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test* third edition is given to every student requesting enrollment in Algebra 1 for high school credit. This score, along with standardized test scores, grade-point average, and teacher recommendations are used to provide parents and students with a placement recommendation.

Students in grade eight take several criterion-referenced tests in addition to the norm-referenced *TerraNova*. While WPMS is not a New York state school, New York State Regents exams are administered to students enrolled in Algebra 1 and Living Environment (Biology) in order to aid student transition to grade nine at the local high school in nearby Highland Falls. The results of these annual exams, given in June, are analyzed in August by the teachers to determine which curriculum standards may require additional emphasis the following year. This is also true for the New York State Foreign Language Proficiency Exam, given to all Spanish I and II students at the end of grade eight. While WPMS students consistently perform well above the state and local averages on these exams, there is always more that can be gleaned from close scrutiny by teachers, departments, and administration.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) has contracted the use of the on-line gradebook program, Gradespeed, which provides parents and students with real-time access to assignments, grades, and attendance data over the internet. Every student is provided login credentials at the start of the school year, at which time they are also trained in program navigation. Parents are invited to sign up for their own account, but the majority access the program with their student's login. This creates regular opportunities for parents and students to have specific, timely discussions about academic progress data and what can be done to improve. Teachers are able to attach notes to individual student scores with comments about how the score was calculated and what steps can be taken to increase it. Access to this data has empowered our parents to actively engage in our school's vision to ensure highest achievement for all learners.

Assessment results are shared with West Point Middle School (WPMS) stakeholders in a variety of ways. Individual *TerraNova* assessment results are sent to parents every May upon receipt from CTB McGraw Hill, along with a letter explaining how to read the home report. Parents with questions are invited to meet with the principal or guidance counselor to discuss. An additional discussion on these results, along with Lexile reading level and classroom-level assessments, takes place with parents and students during conferences at the end of the first marking period. Every student is provided with an explanation of their Lexile score in their Language Arts class, which is captured three times per school year.

School, district, and system-level *TerraNova* assessment results are communicated to parents and the community at large through the school newsletter and web site. A detailed analysis is provided to the West Point Schools School Board every May. This data is also shared at new student orientation and

Open House in the fall. Local assessment data measuring progress on the school improvement goals to improve writing and problem solving across the curriculum is shared in the same way. The results of DoDEA's biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey are similarly communicated, along with a detailed action plan targeting any areas of concern that come to light from the survey.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Sharing lessons learned in person with other schools is challenging for West Point Middle School (WPMS) staff due to its isolated location. WPMS is part of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), which operates 194 schools in fourteen districts located in twelve foreign countries, seven states, Guam, and Puerto Rico. It is a member of the New York/Virginia/Puerto Rico district of DoDEA, with nine of eleven district schools operating outside the state of New York. Although face-to-face sharing sessions have been difficult to arrange, the staff at WPMS has found ways to share successful strategies with other schools in DoDEA.

The principal of WPMS participates in monthly administrative conferences by video teleconference with other school leaders in the district. Over the past few years, he has presented strategies on the use of the Blackboard communication portal to streamline and standardize communication amongst teachers and district support staff. A host of student data, including standardized test scores, is posted on the password-protected web site to allow everyone real-time access to student performance data. He also presented the school's system for tracking student academic performance using the Gradespeed program, an online, networked grade book program that provides parents and students access to grades, assignments, and attendance data. The principal is currently serving on a performance appraisal task force, on which he shares his experiences with the teacher evaluation process using the current DoDEA system.

The guidance counselor has served on many committees and task forces during her career with DoDEA. She currently serves on the middle school task force, which was established to provide a common, DoDEA-wide program for middle schools throughout the system. At the task force meetings, she shared WPMS's successful use of flex time to provide both academic support and enrichment using a seminar period. She provided details regarding the school's implementation of the block schedule in 2005 and subsequent change to the traditional schedule in 2010, and how she worked with the principal to ensure that elective offerings such as art, PE, and music remained accessible to all students. Teachers share successful teaching strategies with job-alike colleagues over video teleconferences led by district instructional support specialists. The language arts materials implementation training held in the fall of 2010 included ample time for teachers to share some best practices in helping struggling readers with their counterparts in Quantico, VA.

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum provided to the students of West Point Middle School is based on the curriculum standards adopted by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) for use in its 192 schools located on US military installations around the world. Due to the high mobility rate of military-connected students, it is critical that every school in the system adheres to the standards to provide curricular continuity for highly-transient students. DoDEA standards for the core subjects of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies were evaluated in 2009 by the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) for breadth, depth, clarity, and specificity and received a favorable McREL rating. DoDEA provides students and teachers with up-to-date materials and the most current, research-based teaching practices in instruction. To meet all students' learning needs, teachers differentiate instruction and access additional resources as necessary.

English Language Arts: The English Language Arts curriculum provides students rich, rigorous programs that address literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as 21st-century skills in research, technology, and media. This standards-based curriculum allows students to explore the world around them through integrated reading and writing programs.

Mathematics: The Mathematics curriculum spirals through five major strands: Number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis and probability. These strands are addressed using five major process standards: problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, connections, and representation. Algebra 1 for high school credit is offered at grade eight.

Science: In grade five, inquiry-based learning that emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving provides the foundation for students to acquire the knowledge, skills and processes pertaining to the physical, life, and earth sciences. In grades six through eight, the science content is presented through an integrated approach that interlinks concepts and skills in physical, life, and earth sciences. Students are engaged in learning science by designing, conducting, and communicating their own investigations, using technology to assist in collection, analysis, and communication of data. A Living Environment (Biology) course that follows New York state standards is paired with Algebra 1 at grade eight.

Social Studies: Students in grade five study the development of the American nation to 1850. Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Students in Grade 7 learn about the regions and nations of the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. Grade eight students explore the ideas, issues, and events leading to the framing of the American Constitution through Reconstruction.

Visual Arts: Art is offered at every grade level as an eighteen-week course. It has four primary goals: create works of art; demonstrate aesthetic perception; develop a knowledge of art heritage; utilize critical judgment of the visual arts.

Performing Arts: Drama is available for all students as an eighteen-week offering. Three levels of band are scheduled at WPMS, open to students in grades five through eight. Guitar I and II are semester-long classes for grades seven and eight; chorus is a year-long class for grades seven and eight as well. Fifty-four percent of WPMS students are enrolled in a music class.

Physical Education: Every student is enrolled in eighteen weeks of physical education. Students develop the personal and social skills for safe and enjoyable performance in a physical activity setting; develop movement skills and patterns to perform a variety of physical activities; and learn the importance of regular participation in physical activity and its contribution to physical fitness and a healthful lifestyle.

Health and Nutrition: Every student is enrolled in nine weeks of health. The DoDEA Health Education Content Standards focus on achievement of health literacy for all students and are aligned to the National Health Education Standards.

Foreign Language: Communication, culture, connection, comparisons, and communities are the five major curriculum strands for foreign language. WPMS offers Spanish I and Spanish II as year-long classes for high school credit. Currently fifty-three percent of seventh graders and fifty-seven percent of eighth graders are enrolled in a Spanish class.

Technology: Video Production and Yearbook are offered as elective courses for students in grades seven and eight. Both classes are taught using exclusively digital media. Video students create the weekly announcements; Yearbook students create, market, and sell the annual school yearbook.

Career Education: All seventh and eighth grade students are enrolled in a nine-week class called, “Pathways to Careers,” in which career exploration activities, interest inventories, and guidance counselor services are provided. WPMS also has an Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program to prepare capable yet underperforming students for a rigorous academic experience in high school that will lead to attendance in college upon graduation.

2. Reading/English:

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) standards used at West Point Middle School (WPMS) incorporate the subjects of reading and language arts into a curriculum area entitled, “English Language Arts.” There are three major strands: reading; writing; speaking and listening. In grades five and six, all WPMS students are enrolled in a double-period course called, “Integrated Language Arts-Reading.” Seventh and eighth grade students take the single class, “English Language Arts.” Additionally, reading support classes are offered at all grade levels for students reading below grade level.

During the fifth-grade year, students increase their vocabulary and their ability to understand and explain words, including those that convey ideas and images. They read a variety of classic and contemporary literature to expand their interest in nonfiction books, poetry, and plays. They write multiple-paragraph compositions for different purposes and a specific audience or person. Transitions are used to connect ideas when they write. They deliver oral responses to literature that demonstrate an understanding of ideas or images communicated by what they have read.

Sixth-grade students make sense of longer, more challenging texts. They identify ways in which authors try to influence readers and find evidence in the text to support ideas. They identify and interpret figurative language and words with multiple meanings and begin to recognize word origins. Autobiographies are read. They critique both informational and literary writing and apply research skills by writing reports that demonstrate the distinction between their own ideas and the ideas of others. They use simple, compound, and complex sentences to express their thoughts and deliver oral presentations.

During the seventh-grade year, students develop advanced skills in reading and writing. They identify and understand idioms and comparisons. Roots and word parts are used to understand science, social studies, and mathematics vocabulary. They continue to read a variety of classic and contemporary literature, nonfiction, poetry, and plays, and they identify their own areas of reading interest. They write or deliver longer research reports (500-800 words) that take a position on a topic and cite references used. A variety of sentence structures and modifiers are used to express their thoughts. They deliver persuasive presentations that state a clear position in support of an argument or proposal.

Grade eight students study the history and the development of English vocabulary. They continue to read classic and contemporary literature, nonfiction, poetry, and plays, and they compare and contrast the different types of writing and different perspectives on similar topics or themes. They evaluate the logic of informational texts and analyze how literature reflects the beliefs of the authors. They write or deliver

research reports (750-1,000 words) and conduct their own research. They use the conventions of Standard English correctly.

3. Mathematics:

The five major Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) curriculum strands of numbers and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis and probability are spiraled through grades five through eight. Standardized test results are provided to teachers at the start of the school year to identify students in need of differentiated instructional offerings. Student progress is continually monitored by teachers using both formative and summative assessments and administration using the networked grade book program. In-school and after-school assistance is provided to students performing below grade level.

The fifth grade curriculum emphasizes essential understandings for numbers and operations, including place value, fractions, decimals, and percentages. Algebraic foundation is laid as students express general rules for a pattern, use of a variable to express an unknown, and order of operations. Properties of three-dimensional objects are introduced, as are the graphing of ordered pairs in the first quadrant. Measurements of area and volume are taught in grade five, as is the conversion of units of measure. Probability and measures of central tendency are explored and their data are represented in both tabular and graphic formats.

Grade six students learn about exponents and factorization to build their understanding of positive and negative decimals and fractions to perform computations with them and arrive at and justify reasonable solutions. Equivalent forms of algebraic equations are generated and solved using the communicative, distributive, and associative properties, including algebraic expressions requiring both constant and varying rates of change. Geometric shapes are classified and evaluated, including the application of rotation, reflection, and tessellation transformations. Measurement instruction focuses on the area and perimeter of regular and irregular polygons. Data analysis lessons include using graphs to explain events and make predictions, and learning how the effects of the size of a data set has on measures of central tendency.

Seventh grade mathematics curriculum continues to build upon and spiral through foundational content taught in grades five and six. Rational and irrational numbers are introduced, as are the algebraic concepts of functions, inverse operations, and equivalent forms through combining like terms. Congruency, proportional reasoning, triangles, and circles are fully addressed, and surface and volume of rectangular prisms are taught at this grade. Students create box and whisker plots in seventh grade and use them to find and interpret quartile, interquartile range, and outliers.

Eighth graders take either a pre-algebra course entitled Mathematics 8 or Algebra 1 for high school credit. Scientific notation, finding the n th term, and rate of change are taught in Mathematics 8. Additionally, angles, Pythagorean Theorem, rate problems, and permutations and combinations are explored in depth. The major strands of the Algebra 1 course are as follows: number sense and operations; polynomials; linear equations and inequalities; quadratic functions and equations; data analysis.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science in grade five focuses on scientific and technological problem-solving and decision making as well as the skills of scientific inquiry: formulating usable questions and hypotheses, planning experiments and product design, conducting systematic observations, interpreting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and communicating the findings to others. Students learn about the life, earth, and physical sciences by exploring them within the framework of the following topics: terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; landforms and oceans; properties of matter; and forces and motion.

The focus for science in grade six is to provide students with a foundation for hands-on experiences that allow for active engagement and concrete examples. Sixth graders expand their investigative skills to

include the ability to differentiate between observation and inference. They explore the life, earth, and physical sciences through the following topics: structures, processes, and responses of plants; structures, processes, and responses of animals; earth's atmosphere and weather; and conservation of energy.

Students in grade seven continue to deepen their knowledge of the life, earth, and physical sciences through more complex investigations and explanations. Seventh graders also continue to develop their investigative skills by generating their own questions, recognizing and explaining the relationships among variables, and critiquing the conclusions that are drawn from scientific investigations. They explore the sciences within the framework of the following topics: cells and heredity; human body systems and disease; ecology: the biotic and abiotic environment; the chemical nature of matter.

The eighth grade science standards emphasize designing an entire controlled scientific investigation, constructing explanations and drawing conclusions from data, and generating questions for further study. Students explore the life, earth, and physical sciences through the following topics: earth's biological history; earth's structure and processes; astronomy: earth and space systems; forces and motion; waves.

In addition to the regular Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) eighth grade science course, West Point Middle School (WPMS) offers a Living Environment (Biology) course for interested students, primarily those transitioning to the local high school in the nearby town of Highland Falls. New York State curriculum standards are followed for the course, including 1,200 minutes of laboratory time, in order to prepare students to demonstrate their learning on the New York State Regents Exam every June. This class, the only one offered in any DoDEA middle school, is one of the many ways in which WPMS carries out its vision of, "Ensuring highest achievement for all learners."

5. Instructional Methods:

Classroom-level formative assessments delivered at the beginning of units of study are the keystones of effective differentiated instruction at West Point Middle School (WPMS). Teachers have been trained on the "Assessment for Learning," (AFL) principles for quality assessment developed by Rick Stiggins et al at the Assessment Training Institute. Central to this approach is the identification of clear learning targets that communicate essential lesson outcomes to students at the outset and are based on real-time assessment data that captures students' present levels of understanding. Given the highly transient military population served by WPMS, these initial assessments usually reveal gaps in learning for a broad range of learners.

Teachers employ a variety of differentiation strategies to meet the needs of every student at WPMS. Many learners perform well above the average range, so higher-order questioning, curriculum compacting, and independent study assignments are provided to keep these students at their tipping points of learning. For struggling students, English language learners, and students receiving special education services, tiered assignments provide varied levels of activities and assignments to ensure that they explore and practice concepts at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and that prompts continued growth. While military-connected students often have learning gaps, they also demonstrate exceptional aptitude in particular curricular areas, so WPMS teachers also use formative assessment data to establish flexible groups in the classroom to promote learning at their present level while addressing interpersonal communication by ensuring groups are structured and restructured throughout the school year according to instructional needs and student interests.

Other differentiation strategies being used by teachers at WPMS include social action projects, Socratic seminars, and task cards. All of these strategies involve a significant student choice component, in which their preferences and interests are used to drive instructional activities that lead to authentic, powerful evidence of learning that stays with students long after the completion of the task. Several teachers are working on unit development based on Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, as well as engaging students by appealing to their cognitive processing strengths: narrative; logical-quantitative; foundational; aesthetic; and experiential.

6. Professional Development:

There are three major components of West Point Middle School's (WPMS) professional development program: Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)-directed trainings; school improvement plan initiatives; local school professional development activities. DoDEA-directed trainings include curriculum materials implementation activities that prepare teachers to effectively employ recently-adopted materials to ensure that student learning is aligned to DoDEA standards. DoDEA is in the second year of a six-year professional development program focused on Using Data to Differentiate Instruction. Days are provided every year for principals to deliver training modules based on the work of Carol Ann Tomlinson. Topics for school year 2010-2011 include using data for flexible grouping and creating assessments for challenging and appropriate tasks. Another DoDEA-level professional development offering orients teachers to the Teacher's Guide to *TerraNova*, Third Edition, the norm-referenced standardized test used by DoDEA to track and report student progress to stakeholders.

A great deal of time and attention is provided for professional development activities related to WPMS's school improvement plan. All DoDEA schools are required to identify school improvement goals as part of the AdvancEd accreditation process; WPMS's goals are to improve both writing and problem solving across the curriculum. Monthly staff development sessions are conducted by the principal and School Improvement Leadership Team to assist teachers in full implementation of the interventions of the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing for the writing goal and the Big6 for the problem solving goal. Teachers engage in guided collegial discussions on the creation, delivery, and assessment of lessons using the interventions, and exemplars are collected and discussed in small groups that look at student work samples to ensure both concept attainment and standard alignment.

A third component of WPMS's professional development program consists of locally-develop activities based on unique local needs identified by teachers and the principal. Six early-release collaboration days are built into the calendar to conduct these activities. Topics include vertical and horizontal curriculum articulation, highlighting essential "power standards" that must be fully addressed in a subject at a given grade level. Differentiated instruction strategies were explored at a recent session, at which teachers were tasked with creating and discussing two lessons that incorporated the strategies outlined in the "DoDEA Program Guide for Gifted Education." Other topics include the use of technology in the classroom and appropriate provision of modifications and accommodations for special education students.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy that guides West Point Middle School (WPMS) is fully expressed in the school's vision statement, "West Point Middle School ensures highest achievement for all learners." This simple promise to the students and parents of the West Point community lets all stakeholders know exactly what the professional learning community values. The school leadership frames all improvement initiatives in this context, providing and requiring student performance data to be used in all instructional decisions made at the school. In short, what gets tracked gets done, so the school leadership is open and public with both present data and desired improvement targets to be met. While complacency and self-satisfaction are often formidable roadblocks toward improvement in high-performing schools, the leadership's straightforward message that every school can and must continually improve has kept teachers, students, and parents striving for ongoing growth for every single student enrolled at WPMS.

The leadership structure at WPMS includes two administrative positions, a principal and a resource manager that works logistical matters for WPMS and an adjacent elementary school of roughly 500 students. A school improvement leadership team comprised of five teachers guide the school improvement process, with separate parent and student committees. Grade-level chairs lead weekly team meetings. A student council is in place for all grades, the leaders of which meet routinely with the principal. The principal is highly visible at every lunch and recess period, during which he interacts with students to maintain positive relations with them. He posts and tracks a D/F list every two weeks, meeting with every student on the list and talking with teachers and parents on ways to provide assistance. The entire focus is on preventing failure by discovering and removing barriers to success. A pyramid of

interventions, modeled after those espoused in Professional Learning Communities at Work (Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker), has been established and is in use as a programmed response to any student experiencing difficulty. The principal visits every classroom several times per week and meets weekly with grade-level teacher teams. By maintaining a high level of visibility both in and out of the classrooms, the principal is able to monitor and model appropriate actions taking place throughout the school that are aligned with the vision statement.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	691	670	669	681	700
Number of students tested	59	67	68	67	68
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	685	676	690	682	700
Number of students tested	59	67	68	67	68
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	707	696	694	702	697
Number of students tested	54	68	66	67	69
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score		639			
Number of students tested		10			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	693	692	689	693	686
Number of students tested	54	68	66	67	69
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score		650	664		
Number of students tested		10	12		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	712	714	719	712	712
Number of students tested	65	57	74	72	64
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score	652	679		682	
Number of students tested	10	10		10	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					711
Number of students tested					11
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score			677		
Number of students tested			10		
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	697	696	704	690	706
Number of students tested	65	57	74	72	64
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score	666	677		670	
Number of students tested	10	10		10	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					706
Number of students tested					11
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score			688		
Number of students tested			10		
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	726	730	730	737	751
Number of students tested	54	62	67	61	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score	704				
Number of students tested	14				
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score				730	
Number of students tested				11	
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8

Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Ed 2/2000, Ed 3/2007

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	709	718	720	726	738
Number of students tested	54	62	67	61	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score	690				
Number of students tested	14				
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score				731	
Number of students tested				11	
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Data on disadvantaged students (students who receive free/reduced lunch) is not collected at the district level.					

11DD1